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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

DATE: 25X1A

SUBJECT Anti-Semitism

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. The Soviet Government has always discouraged anti-Semitism among the population. For example, since the Revolution it has been officially forbidden to refer to a man as a "zhid" (Jew) instead of "evrei" (Hebrew), but during the war the enforcement of this measure was relaxed and offenders were seldom given the usual one year's imprisonment. **Comment:** In pre-revolutionary Russian, "zhid" had an unpleasant secondary meaning, whereas "evrei" did not. "Zhid" does not even appear in the best recent Russian-English dictionary.) Racial discrimination, which was easy for the authorities to control before the war, became a greater problem during the fighting, with the result that it was largely ignored except where it attained an open and organized status.

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An agreement between the Soviet Government and the Provisional Polish Government in London excluded many thousand Polish Jews in Northern Russia from conscription in the Soviet Army, which caused wide-spread accusations against these men as being cowards and slackers. Moreover, many of those exempted because they were key industrial or professional figures were also Jews.

In 1942 in Kokand and neighboring Middle Asiatic cities, hundreds of Soviet citizens were arrested on suspicion of organizing a pogrom. Again in 1944 a pogrom grew out of a Jewish veteran being refused reinstatement in his former dwelling in Kiev. So great was the hatred stirred up that Beria personally visited Kiev and caused many arrests to be made. There was a shake-up in the Kiev police department which even included the removal of the Chief of Police.

4. To suppress anti-Semitism among the military, the Ministry of Armed Forces in 1943 replaced all Jewish supply officers with non-Jews. Incompetence and thievery followed and the former officers were reinstated.
5. Since the war's end, evidences of anti-Semitic feeling have been growing within the Soviet Army, by reason of the fact that in many cases the temperament and native intelligence of Jewish personnel have resulted in their obtaining the more desirable clerical positions.
6. Since the war, official measures taken to curb anti-Semitism within the Soviet Union have met with considerable opposition, particularly in the Caucasus, Middle Asia, Western Ukraine, and the Baltic States.

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7. Source believes that many Jewish officers now serving in the Soviet Army would desert rather than return to the USSR after demobilization. In fact, many of them are purposely contracting venereal and other diseases to avoid being sent back to Russia, where they feel they will be eventually sent to the most undesirable parts of Asiatic Russia, simply because they are Jews.

8. Source claims to have heard several reports that Birobidzhan, capital of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast, is the center of the most undesirable climatic area. Frequent epidemics of typhus and dysentery, lack of medical care, and scarcity of food have combined to cause an alarming number of deaths. Jews in the USSR live in mortal fear of being sent to Birobidzhan, to which they refer as "worse than death" and "more horrible than Siberian hell".

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Comment: The disturbance in Kiev, mentioned in Para. 3, was previously reported, apparently by the same informant, to have occurred in August 1945.)

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